



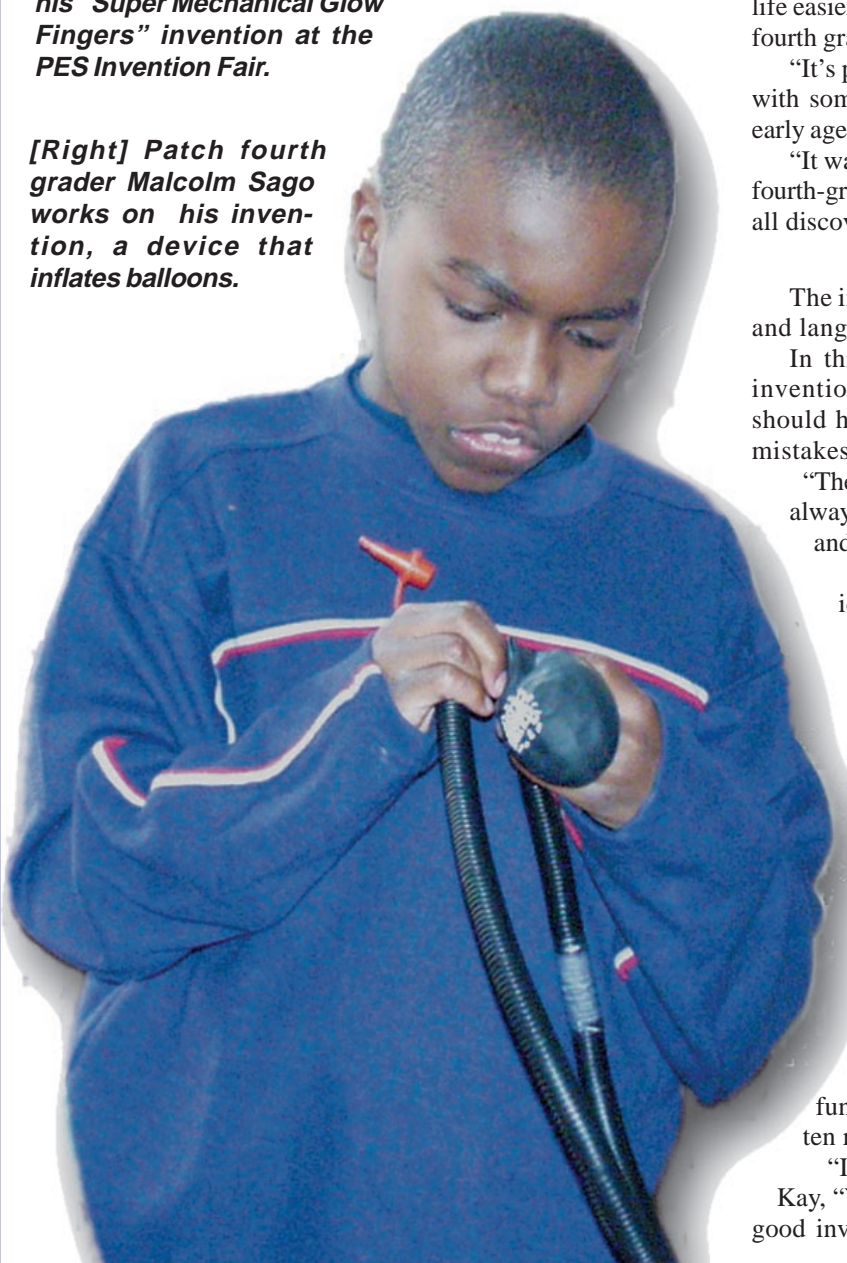
## It's 'elementary,' my dear

### Annual Invention Fair highlights ingenuity of area 4th-graders

Story & photos by Melanie Casey

**[Above] Budding inventor Joshua Wood, 10, describes his "Super Mechanical Glow Fingers" invention at the PES Invention Fair.**

**[Right] Patch fourth grader Malcolm Sago works on his invention, a device that inflates balloons.**



**S**hoes that put down salt as you walk so that you don't slip on ice. A baby stroller that doesn't get stuck in the snow. A device for filling humidifiers without spilling water.

These are just some of the inventions created by Patch Elementary School fourth graders for the annual Invention Fair held Feb. 5 in the school's lobby.

Students in the three PES fourth grade classes, about 65 in all, were tasked to "invent, design and build a tool which would make life easier or safer, entertain or solve an everyday problem," said fourth grade teacher Barbara Kloss.

"It's pretty neat," said parent Dale Wood. "The kids came up with some very good inventions. It's good they do this at an early age."

"It was a fun learning experience," said Laura Lewis, whose fourth-grader participated. "They got their creativity going. They all discovered they could invent something."

#### *"What an Idea!"*

The invention fair was tied into a "Literacy Place" reading and language program entitled "What an Idea!," Kloss said.

In this unit, students learned about inventors and their inventions and discussed what qualities a good inventor should have. They also saw that even great inventors made mistakes and had failures, she said.

"The kids learned that when you try new things, they don't always succeed," Kloss said. "[They learned] to stick to it and keep trying."

They also garnered "the confidence to present their ideas to other kids and their parents," she said.

#### *Looking at life with scientific inquiry*

The invention project also allowed students to apply the scientific inquiry process of identifying a problem, developing a hypothesis, experimenting, observing and drawing a conclusion.

"One of the focuses of our School Improvement Plan is for students to improve their reasoning skills by using this process," Kloss said.

"I'm impressed with the thought processes the kids used to create these inventions," said PES Principal Susan Pleiss.

#### *Making the grade*

The students were evaluated on the creativity and functionality of their inventions, their displays, their written reports and their [videotaped] oral presentations.

"I think that it's good," said fourth grade student Tiarah Kay, "We're learning. Who knows – we might grow up to be good inventors."

## Patch students to perform with All-Europe Band, Choir

By Hugh C. McBride

**E**ighteen Patch High School musicians and singers have been selected to perform with the Department of Defense Dependents Schools All-Europe Band and Choir.

For the 20th consecutive year, the honors ensembles will gather in Bad Kissingen for three days of rehearsals followed by a March 17 performance in the Regentenbau Concert Hall, which a DoDDS-Europe media release describes as "one of the world's great concert halls."

#### *'A high achievement'*

In an e-mail to the local students who were selected for the festival, Patch Music Director Gary Kelb termed the PHS musicians' selection to the honors program "a high achievement for our school."

Kelb noted that PHS students will make up 12 percent of the performing students – second only to the larger Ramstein High School.

#### *Intense preparation*

Students were selected for the All-Europe Honors Band and Choir based upon audition recordings.

Of the 364 students who submitted tapes for evaluation this year, only 140 – including performers and alternates – were selected to participate in the program.

Audition tapes were judged according to the following criteria:

- Excellence of musical interpretation
- Accuracy of articulation
- Musical phrasing
- Timbre and musical technique

The following PHS students have been selected for the 2004 DoDDS All-Europe Honors Band and Choir.

#### *Band*

- Meredith Beatty – French horn
- Diana Drabek – trumpet
- Clare Gellene – clarinet
- Tatiana Maldonado – flute
- Jodi Moscone – French horn
- Keenan Wolfe – percussion

Alternates:

- Josh Anderson – trumpet
- Kyle Wolfe – trombone

#### *Choir*

- Melissa Arnold – soprano
- Christina Banchs – alto
- David Bracero – bass
- Aaron Criswell – bass
- Matt Criswell – bass
- Sean Dowty – tenor
- Holly Drabek – tenor
- Bryan McGill – tenor
- Kevin McGill – bass
- Quinton Roberts – bass
- Jimmy Russell – tenor

Alternate:

- Ashley Hunt – soprano

For more information about DoDDS-Europe visit [www.eu.odedodea.edu](http://www.eu.odedodea.edu).

For more about the Bad Kissingen and the Regentenbau Concert Hall visit [www.badkissingen.de](http://www.badkissingen.de).